

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER 2025

No	Item	Summary of Key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
1.	Apologies	Councillor Kyle and McGlinchey	n/a
2.	Declarations of Interest	None	n/a
3.	Minutes of Finance Committee meeting held Thursday 11 September 2025	Confirmed as a correct record	n/a
4.	Prompt Payments	Noted	
5.	APP Forecast	Noted	
6.	Treasury Management mid-year review	Noted	
7.	Treasury Management - Officer authorisation	To recommend that Council approve the authorisation of the Management Accountant to deal with Treasury Management activities and that they be added to the approved authority list for processing online banking payments	
8.	Management Accounts Period 5	To recommend that Council approve the transfer of the £200,000 budget allocation in preparation for the next staging of the Air Show be transferred into the Strategic Events Reserve	

9.	Correspondence		
9.1	Letter to Local Council Chief Executives and Finance Officers – Review of the Rates	<i>Noted; To recommend that Council table the Partnership Panel monthly going forward as a forum to relay disappointment that value for money not provided in respect of Rates Support Grant</i>	
9.2	DfC Review of Rates Support Grant – Report		
9.3	Rates Support Grant Review - Recommendations		
9.4	Audit Completion Letter 24-25 CCG	<i>Noted</i>	
9.5	CCG Audit Certificate 24-25 – signed	<i>Noted</i>	
	<i>In Committee (Items 10-inclusive)</i>		
10.	Debt Management	<i>Noted</i>	
11.	Rates Estimates 2026-2027 1st draft	<i>Noted</i>	
12.	Leisure & Development Directorate budget presentation	<i>To recommend that Council agree the level of assumptions discussed for inclusion in the estimates for the 26/27 period</i>	
13.	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12 (0))	<i>None</i>	<i>n/a</i>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND VIA
VIDEO CONFERENCE,
ON THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7.00PM**

In the Chair: Councillor Peacock (C)

Members Present: Alderman Callan (C), Coyle (C), Knight-McQuillan (C),
Scott (C)
Councillors Holmes (C), Huggins (C), Kane (C),
McQuillan (R), Mairs (C), Nicholl (R) Schenning (C),
Wilson (R), Wisener (C)

Officers Present: D Wright, Chief Finance Officer (C)
P Mulvenna, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
I Owens, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)
A Lennox, ICT Officer (C)
L Boyd, ICT Officer (C)

In Attendance: -

The Chief Finance Officer undertook a roll call.

The Chair advised Committee of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Councillor Kyle and McGlinchey.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were recorded

**3. MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY 11
SEPTEMBER 2025**

Copy previously circulated.

AGREED –the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held Thursday 11 September 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. PROMPT PAYMENTS

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Background

Department for communities (DfC) requires Council to record and publish statistics regarding the payment of supplier invoices with specific reference to two distinct measures namely invoices paid within 10 working days and invoices paid within 30 calendar days.

Detail

These figures are published on a quarterly basis by DfC with Councils required to do likewise. The purpose of the statistics is to encourage Councils to support businesses especially those local and/or small businesses for whom cash flow is of vital importance to their continued survival. In addition, as part of Council's performance improvement plan for this year the payment of our suppliers has been identified as one of the performance improvement objectives with a target of 90% of suppliers being paid within 30 calendar days. The tables below detail Council's performance since April 2023 the latest data being for quarter 2 of 25/26 year, up to and including end of September 2025.

Analysis

The statistics will be continually monitored to ensure the performance levels are maintained and where possible improved. Council's self-imposed target remains at 90% of invoices being paid within 30 days. During September 87.52% (August 84.77%) of invoices were paid within 30 days. This is a slight improvement in performance but is still disappointing as we continue to miss our 90% target, finance staff continue to look into possible explanations with a view to restoring previous levels, especially given our year to date performance continues to be well short of last year.

Prompt Payment Statistics 2023/2024					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Total No of Invoices	6512	7263	6847	7031	27653
Total amount paid	£ 23,864,802	£ 17,139,245	£ 13,837,183	£ 13,491,210	£ 68,332,440
Number of invoices paid within 10 days	3675	5233	5444	5774	20126
% of invoices paid within 10 days	56.43%	72.05%	79.51%	82.12%	72.78%
Number of invoices paid within 30 days	5398	6232	6215	6301	24146
% of invoices paid within 30 days	82.89%	85.80%	90.77%	89.62%	87.32%
Number of invoices paid outside 30 days	1114	1031	632	730	3507
% of invoices paid outside 30 days	17.11%	14.20%	9.23%	10.38%	12.68%
No. of Disputed Invoices	33	162	35	169	399
% of disputed invoices	0.51%	2.23%	0.51%	2.40%	1.44%
Average Payment Days	18.71	15.59	11.36	13.58	14.64
Prompt Payment Statistics 2024/2025					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Total No of Invoices	6890	7030	7234	6931	28085
Total amount paid	£ 15,645,094	£ 14,616,411	£ 13,040,366	£ 11,221,971	£ 54,523,842
Number of invoices paid within 10 days	5304	5316	5820	5220	21660
% of invoices paid within 10 days	76.98%	75.62%	80.45%	75.31%	77.12%
Number of invoices paid within 30 days	6274	6336	6813	6208	25631
% of invoices paid within 30 days	91.06%	90.13%	94.18%	89.57%	91.26%
Number of invoices paid outside 30 days	616	694	421	723	2454
% of invoices paid outside 30 days	8.94%	9.87%	5.82%	10.43%	8.74%
No. of Disputed Invoices	37	54	40	42	173
% of disputed invoices	0.54%	0.77%	0.55%	0.61%	0.62%
Average Payment Days	11.86	11.64	9.84	12.60	11.47
Prompt Payment Statistics 2025/2026					
	Q1	Q2*	Q3	Q4	Total
Total No of Invoices	6819	4619			11438
Total amount paid	£ 15,915,510	£ 13,166,637			£ 29,082,147
Number of invoices paid within 10 days	5003	3380			8383
% of invoices paid within 10 days	73.37%	73.18%			73.29%
Number of invoices paid within 30 days	6112	4045			10157
% of invoices paid within 30 days	89.63%	87.57%			88.80%
Number of invoices paid outside 30 days	707	574	0	0	1281
% of invoices paid outside 30 days	10.37%	12.43%			11.20%
No. of Disputed Invoices	30	25		42	97
% of disputed invoices	0.44%	0.54%			0.85%
Average Payment Days	12.59	14.28			-10.03
*Incomplete period					

It is recommended that Council note the report.

The Chief Finance Officer said that the Finance team were striving to get percentages back on track

Committee NOTED the report.

5. APP FORECAST

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the latest Actual Penny Product (APP) forecast supplied by Land and Property Services (LPS).

Background

LPS has issued to Councils the latest informal in year forecast as at 31 August 2025. The forecast for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has been based on in year assumptions

Monthly Analysis

Month	Jun	Jul	Aug
Forecast	£(21)	£28	£118

All figures £'000

Additional analysis

The figures indicate a reasonable projected finalisation in terms of rates income for Council, the initial clawback having been reversed, however it is too early to place any major reliance on the figures. As previously reported it is worth noting that costs of collection have increased significantly from last year due to back date pay awards for civil service staff.

APP analysis

The tables below set out the analysis of the APP forecast for the current financial year in terms of both domestic and non-domestic properties.

Revaluation

There are still a number of outstanding revaluation challenge cases and whilst they could impact on our future rates income most of the significant challenges have by now been dealt with.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council note the report.

The Chief Finance Officer referred the Committee to updates saying he hoped the current trend would continue.

Committee NOTED the report.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Background

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

Detail

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. In addition, the Department for Communities (DfC) issued *Guidance on Local Authority Investments* in November 2019 that requires the Authority to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the DfC Guidance.

Review

The purpose of this report is to provide a mid-year review of what has taken place in terms of Treasury Management within the Council thus far during the 2025/26 financial year following on from the annual review of 2024/25 presented to Council in April 2025.

Borrowing

Council borrowing is used to fund various capital projects as approved by Council and as a result of this activity Council has an extensive portfolio of current loans. The table, previously circulated, showed a breakdown of these loans at the end of each of the last 4 quarters.

Council continues to hold significant cash reserves therefore no new loans were borrowed during the year to date, Council instead utilising those reserves in the short term to finance capital expenditure thus avoiding incurring interest on loans. With interest rates having peaked officers have assessed whether or not a change of strategy would be prudent to potentially draw down some of the longer terms loans, the advice is currently still to utilize cash reserves and only borrow

if necessary for the short term to avoid locking in potentially higher interest over the life of a longer-term loan.

Investments

Council carried significant cash reserves into 2025/26 and despite the recent cut to interest rates there are still some decent returns to be gained with investment or lending. The table previously circulated, detailed the cash held by Council at the end of each of the last 4 quarters up to the end of September 2025.

The next table and chart details actual investments made by Council maturing during the current year and the returns associated with those investments, the figures above do not include these investments where the maturity date straddles a quarter end.

Treasury Management Strategy

In line with Council's Treasury Management Strategy and despite the recent cut to interest rates Council will seek to continue making investments like those detailed in 1.5 above during the 2025/26 financial year where there are now sufficient returns to justify the action and whilst those returns are still likely to be modest they will still none the less provide an income stream to Council and assist to offset a little of the financial pressures currently being faced. The 2025/26 budget has included an estimated income from investments amounting to £600,000.

It is recommended that Council note the report.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that guidance required the regular reporting of Treasury Management figures to the Finance Committee.

Alderman Callan congratulated the Finance team on performance and welcomed the useful update for Elected Members.

Councillor Peacock said to meet the optimistic target was amazing.

Committee NOTED the report.

***Councillor Holmes joined the meeting in the Chamber at 7.05 pm**

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT – OFFICER AUTHORISATION

Report, previously circulated was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Background

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

Detail

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. In addition, the Department for Communities (DfC) issued *Guidance on Local Authority Investments* in November 2019 that requires the Authority to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the DfC Guidance.

Review

The purpose of this report is to request an additional officer authorisation to deal with Treasury Management activities on behalf of Council. The current authorisation extends to the Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Financial Accountant. A recent internal audit of Treasury Management activities recommended that the current authorisation is slightly small meaning that during a period of absence such as annual leave there may only be one person dealing with these activities and Council should therefore consider extending the delegated authority. Having considered the recommendation of internal audit Officers are requesting an additional Officer be authorised for Treasury Management.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the authorisation of the Management Accountant to deal with Treasury Management activities and that they be added to the approved authority list for processing online banking payments.

The Chief Finance Officer explained the rationale for the proposal and provided commentary on the report findings.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED – To recommend that Council approve the authorisation of the Management Accountant to deal with Treasury Management activities and that they be added to the approved authority list for processing online banking payments.

8. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS PERIOD 5

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the current management accounts to Council for information and analysis.

Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CC&GBC) provides a range of services to the Borough of Causeway Coast and Glens which stretches from Lough Foyle in the west to the Glens of Antrim in the east covering an area of 1,968 square kilometres and with a population of approximately 145,000. The council is currently made up of 3 directorates (Leisure and Development, Environmental Services, Corporate Policy and Resources) and includes a Planning, Finance and Legal department, that are reported separately in this report. The Annual Budgeted Spend for 2025/26 controlled by the Directorates is £86.408m (excludes depreciation, actuarial adjustments, provisions, accumulated absences, and it is these figures that change the figures in the Audited Accounts). Gross Income is budgeted at £86.408m meaning a balanced budget was approved for the year.

Financial Overview by Directorate

The table below details a draft summary of the financial position at period 5 (up to and including 31 August 2025).

Council is showing a favourable variance against budget at period 5 amounting to £1,456,424 (period 4 - £1,165,847) however it should be noted that this contains an exceptional income item relating to Leisure VAT of £371,681. Adjusting for this the operational variance at period 5 is £1,084,743 (Period 4 - £794,166), an increase of £290,577 therefore should this position be maintained throughout the year Council would be in surplus operationally, increasing

reserves by this amount. The most significant contributor to this position is Leisure & Development.

Income and Expenditure Analysis

The overall position with regards staffing costs is shown in the table below by Directorate, previously circulated.

Council is currently adverse against budget in terms of staffing at £257,719 (period 4 - £134,892); this is after adjusting for the impending pay award which had been budgeted for at 3%. At the time of writing this report it had just been announced that a 3.2% pay award had been agreed and this will be implemented in September thereby being included from period 6 onwards, it is anticipated that the payroll budget should be sufficient to meet the year's total pay bill the current adverse balance possibly being due to some seasonality.

The table previously circulated, sets out the budgetary position of all other areas of expenditure against budget by Directorate:

At period 5 this is £330k (Period 4 - £298k) adverse. It should be noted that the Funding Unit (£215k [period 4 - £178k]) relates mainly to grant expenditure, which is externally funded, and these adverse variances will be offset by income. Estates (221k £239k]) is adverse mainly due to maintenance materials and equipment.

Income levels remain strong for period 5 following on from 2024/25 and the position is as detailed in the table below by Directorate, at period 4 the variance was £1,599k:

As mentioned previously above the main contributor to this position is Leisure & Development with the excellent income generation from our Leisure Centres continuing into 2025/26, despite significant increases in budgeted income the service continues to exceed budget at this stage. In addition, the income for Prosperity & Place and the Funding Unit are favourable, Funding Unit as indicated above offsetting the adverse expenditure variances in this area. Also performing well at period 4 are Planning (£90k favourable [period 4 - £117k favourable]) and investment income (£250k favourable [period 4 - £150k favourable]), it is anticipated that Investment Income will exceed the annual budget for the year.

Commentary was provided on the overall income per Directorate.

Summary

This report represents steady performance following a solid start to the financial year, especially again with regards some of our income streams however it is

imperative that Council remains vigilant over the coming months to ensure the performance is maintained.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the transfer of the £200,000 budget allocation in preparation for the next staging of the Air Show be transferred into the Strategic Events Reserve.

***Alderman Coyle and Knight-McQuillan joined the meeting in the Chamber at 7.15 pm**

The Chief Finance Officer spoke of the favourable position and reminded Elected Members that some spending had not yet been budgeted for.

Alderman Scott said that this was an excellent set of accounts.

The Chief Finance Officer answered queries from Elected Members in respect of the adverse figures in relation to Operations and income from Leisure Directorate.

In response to Elected Members regarding reserves the Chief Finance Officer advised that towards the end of the year Elected Members may be asked to make a decision regarding Armed Forces Day funding and confirmed that at this stage he was not aware of any outworkings from Committees in this regard. The Chief Finance Officer said that money cannot be taken from reserves without Council permission and that currently provision has been agreed for the Open Golf and Air Show. At the request of Alderman Callan the Chief Finance Officer clarified that there had been no Financial Management Team meetings tabled in part due to the summer recess and because these required approval by the Senior Management Team.

Proposed by Alderman Scott

Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED – To recommend that Council approve the transfer of the £200,000 budget allocation in preparation for the next staging of the Air Show be transferred into the Strategic Events Reserve.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence, previously circulated, was presented as read.

9.1 Letter to Local Council Chief Executives and Finance Officers – Review of the Rates

9.2 DfC Review of Rates Support Grant – Report

9.3 Rates Support Grant Review - Recommendations

The Chief Finance Officer advised that Items 9.1 – 9.3 related to the review of the Rates Support Grant including findings, recommendations and department response.

Alderman Callan felt there should be discussion on lobbying the Department regarding issues around lack of support from the Rates Support Fund and statutory obligations. The Chief Finance Officer advised that whilst there was a statutory obligation it could in theory be satisfied with a nominal amount as low as £1 and referred to the risk of and potential for further reductions.

Councillor Peacock concurred with Alderman Callan and as Partnership Panel representative said that she was presented with a robust breakdown and was aware of the disappointment following deputations to the Department by Partnership Panel members.

The Chief Finance Officer pointed that it was cited in reporting from the Department that there was no equivalent grant in England, Scotland and Wales, however there is a Revenue Support Grant which is used for specific services. The Chief Finance Officer said that without this funding many of the Councils on the mainland would be severely underfunded and that while the mechanism differed from Northern Ireland the principal was similar.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Peacock and

 **AGREED** – To recommend that Council table the Partnership Panel monthly going forward as a forum to relay disappointment that value for money not provided in respect of Rates Support Grant.

9.4 Audit Completion Letter 24-25 CCG

9.5 CCG Audit Certificate 24-25 – signed

The Chief Finance Officer advised that Items 9.4 and 9.5 referred to the Annual Report and Accounts, Certified Accounts and publication of Certificate and advised that Council met its obligations in this regard on 29th September.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Schenning

AGREED – to recommend that Finance Committee move '*In Committee*'.

The information contained in the following items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

- * The meeting moved '*In Committee*' at 7:30pm

10. DEBT MANAGEMENT

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Purpose of Report

This report informs members of the current position surrounding debt owed to the Council by its customers.

Background

Council implemented a revised Debt Management Policy in July 2023.

The tables previously circulated set out the total debt position as at 30 September 2025 and compares this to the position at 30 September 2024.

Detail – Aged Debt Analysis were provided as at 30 September 2025 and 30 September 2024

Movement and comparison between last year and this year (30 September 2025 and 30 September 2024).

With regards the 90 days and over figures there are balances amounting to £40,953 included within the 90 days and over figure relating to invoices which are not Council debt but are invoices issued and collected on an agency contract for a third party under relevant legislative direction.

Over 90 Days analysis

The table, previously circulated, details the status of any debt which was over 90 days in excess of £10 currently (excluding third party invoices and direct debit accounts):

The table, previously circulated, below sets out such debts that have been cleared since the last report in September

Options

Debt write-off under £1,000

In accordance with our debt management policy I am required to report to Council any debts under £1,000 which the Chief Finance Officer has the authority to write-off. There are no such debts this month as detailed below:

Debt Write-off over £1,000

In accordance with our debt management policy, Council approval is sought in order to write off any debts in excess of £1,000. There are no such debts this month.

Committee NOTED the report.

11. RATES ESTIMATES 2026-2027 1ST DRAFT

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the pressures being faced by Council in terms of financial budgeting and the setting of the rate for 2026/27. The summary table details the estimated impact of the larger known high level influences on the rates and therefore gives an indication of the challenges which Council will face and need to address in considering the setting of the rate for 2026/27.

The draft estimates as tabled has necessitated a number of assumptions being made and their impact included to allow us to consider their consequences. These were agreed by this Committee in September. At this stage there are many factors the outcome of which are unknown but we can make some judgements about these. This first draft is at the highest level and does not take into account a great deal of the detail which officers will consider over the next few weeks as we build up a picture of the budgetary requirements for the next financial year.

Other Factors

Whilst provision has been made for all those influences discussed previously there remain many areas to be considered over the next couple of months.

As we continue to look at potential areas of efficiency particularly in regards to our estate, the eventual disposal of some no longer required assets will generate savings which have not yet been included.

Next steps

As stated at the beginning of this report this is a very high level first indication of where some of the main pressures are going to be on budgets for the next year. These figures will be examined in much more detail over the coming weeks and refined to give a more accurate picture of where rates levels are likely to be.

The Chief Finance Officer provided commentary on the report which he advised was a starting point towards achieving a rates estimate for 2026/2027.

Committee NOTED the report

12. LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE BUDGET PRESENTATION

Confidential report, previously circulated was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the additional budgetary requirements for the Leisure & Development directorate, for the 2026/27 period and to seek Council agreement on the setting of general assumptions for inclusion within those estimates.

Background

The L&D budget for 2025/26 is £11,692,803. The net budget is a calculation of the forecast:

- Gross Expenditure of £22.170m.
- Gross Income of £10.477m.

However, in considering the rates for the 26/27 period, there are a number of anticipated additional requirements on service delivery, which need to be considered for the following service areas:-

- Sport & Wellbeing
- Community & Culture
- Tourism & Recreation
- Funding Unit
- Prosperity & Place

The Director provided a summary of increased pressures on the budget.

Next steps

All of the recommendations agreed will be factored into a draft of the 26/27 estimates which will be presented to the Finance Committee. It must be noted that as always, the Leisure & Development staff will also be seeking external funding provision.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council agree the level of assumptions discussed for inclusion in the estimates for the 26/27 period.

The Director of Leisure and Development provided commentary on the report and answered questions from Elected Members in respect of projected income and expenditure.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Alderman Scott and

AGREED – To recommend that Council agree the level of assumptions discussed for inclusion in the estimates for the 26/27 period.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’

Proposed by Councillor Kane
Seconded by Alderman Callan and

AGREED – to recommend that Finance Committee move ‘*In Public*’

13. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS (NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12 (O))

There were no items of Any Other Relevant Business.

This being all the business, the Chair thanked Elected Members for their attendance and the meeting closed at 8:25pm

Chair